

March 13, 2020

To our patients,

Yesterday, Ventura County Public Health declared a local health emergency. The declaration urges health care providers to implement plans for social distancing and encourages all community members who are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 to take actions to reduce their risks. As a health care agency, we are implementing temporary measures to keep our patients safe.

- Rescheduling routine wellness visits including well-woman exams, sports and work physicals, and certain well-child exams. You will be contacted by your provider's office to reschedule these visits when the declaration is lifted.
- Implementing phone call visits for those over age 65 and those with medical conditions that can be managed with a patient-to-provider phone call visit.
- Providing phone call visits for results and follow-up visits.
- Working to separate sick patients from healthy patients who still need to be seen for face-to face provider care.
- Asking patients with cough and fever to notify staff before entering the clinics and wear a mask to protect others.

Thank you for your understanding and please continue to protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19 by practicing hand-washing, avoiding touching your face, keeping a distance of 6 feet from people who are ill, avoiding travel and crowds as much as possible, and staying home if you have mild illness.

Those who are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19 include:

- Older adults
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like:
  - Heart or lung disease
  - Diabetes
  - Chronic kidney disease
- Patients who take medications that suppress the immune system

Watch for symptoms and emergency warning signs:

- Pay attention for potential COVID-19 symptoms including, fever, cough, and shortness of breath. If you feel like you are developing symptoms, call your clinic right away.
- If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19, call 911 and get medical attention *immediately*. In adults, emergency warning signs include:
  - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
  - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
  - New confusion or inability to arouse
  - Bluish lips or face

We appreciate you partnering with us to keep those most vulnerable in our community safe.

Thank you,



*Theresa Cho, MD*  
CEO and Medical Director of Ambulatory Care  
Ventura County Health Care Agency  
Las Islas Diabetes Center and VCMC/SPH Diabetes Management